

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20 have been rejected in the most recent Office Action. Claims 4, 7, 17, 18 and 21-25 have been objected to in the most recent Office Action, but have been indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form and to overcome any minor informalities. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20 have been cancelled hereinabove. Claims 4, 7, 17, 18 and 21-25 have been amended herein as suggested by the Examiner. Claims 4, 7, 17, and 21 have been placed in Independent form. Applicants respectfully traverse each ground of rejection and request reconsideration and further examination of the application under 37 CFR § 1.111. Applicants respond to each ground of rejection and objection as follows.

A. Claims 4, 7, 17, 18 and 21-25 were indicated as allowable.

The applicant would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the above-listed claims as allowable. Claims 4, 7, 17 and 21 have been amended to include the subject matter of their respective base claims and are now in independent form. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 7, 17 and 21 are now allowable.

Claim 18 depends from now independent claim 17 and claims 22-25 depend from now independent claim 21. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 18 and 22-25 are likewise now allowable. Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance be issued regarding claims 4, 17, 17, 18, and 21-25.

B. The disclosure was objected to as containing informalities.

The informalities in the disclosure have been addressed and overcome by the present amendment, as follows: the specification has been updated to include that the recited related patent application no. 10/071,360 has since issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,612,726. It is respectfully submitted that the disclosure is no longer objectionable.

C. The drawings were objected to as failing to apply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5).

The drawings were objected to as not including the reference designation "28A" as mentioned on page 11, lines 21-22 of the specification. An amended replacement drawing sheet including the reference designation "28A" is submitted herewith. It is respectfully submitted that the drawings are no longer objectionable.

D. Claims 4 and 17 were objected to as containing informalities.

Claim 4 was objected to as featuring a term in the singular ("at least two connecting member") that should be in the plural. Claim 17 was objected to as including two distinct articles ("the" and "a") before a term and also as including a misspelled word ("stabalizingly"). These informalities have been addressed via amendment hereinabove. It is respectfully submitted that claims 4 and 17 are no longer objectionable.

E. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20 were rejected under various grounds.

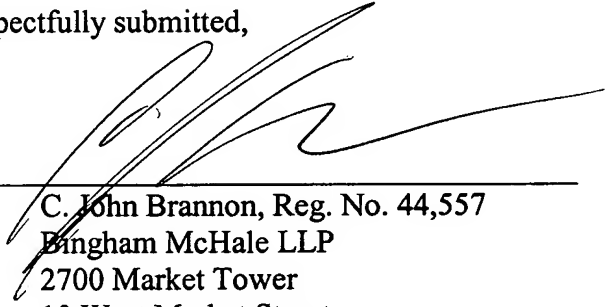
Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20 have been cancelled hereinabove. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20 is moot.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has amended claims 4, 7, 17, and 21 and canceled claims 11-3, 5, 6, 8-16, 19 and 20. Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for pending claims 4, 17, 17, 18, and 21-25. The undersigned welcomes a telephonic interview with the Examiner, if the Examiner believes that such an interview would facilitate review of this Amendment Response. No additional fees are believed to be necessary; however, should any fees be deemed required, please charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0410, but not to include any payment of issue fees.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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